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TIBULLUS: ROMAN AND RUSTIC

by



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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and that they recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled

TIBULLUS: ROMAN AND RUSTIC

submitted by Edna Elizabeth Thomson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The present study of Tibullus' poetry was undertaken because it was felt that his description of the rural scene occupies a prominent position in the elegies of the first two books of the Corpus Tibullianum, but is not generally accorded the attention it deserves.

During the course of the study we have found that Tibullus was a husbandman and a herdsman and that this fact influenced his thinking and his actions even when he was not engaged in the work on his farm. We have found that Tibullus' religious life reflected his connections with the religious traditions of his ancestral home and his associations with other members of a Latin rural community. We have observed also that the poet looked upon the Golden Age as one which afforded ideal living conditions for farmers. Tibullus' choice of words revealed a familiarity with and a preference for the country itself and for life in the country. An examination of his poems has shown that in all these respects Tibullus was a Roman and a rustic.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	TIBULLUS: HUSBANDMAN- HERDSMAN	6
III.	TIBULLUS AND THE GODS	26
IV.	TIBULLUS AND THE GOLDEN AGE	43
V.	SOME WORDS IN TIBULLUS' TWO THEMES	56
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	69

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

rura cano...¹ (ii. 1. 37)

Albius Tibullus, like Catullus, Gallus, Propertius and Ovid, was a writer of Latin love elegies. We have two books containing sixteen elegies written by Tibullus. The other two books of poems which have come down to us under his name are generally considered to be of diverse origin. Ovid called Tibullus cultus and said of his fellow-poet that as long as Cupid's devices were effective, Tibullus' verses would be committed to memory:

donec erunt ignes arcusque Cupidinis arma,
discentur numeri, culte Tibulle, tui.²

In his Institutio Oratoria Quintilian, teacher of rhetoric and literary critic of the first century A. D., indicated that of the four elegists of the Augustan age, Tibullus was his favorite, considering him to be especially free from fault, and elegant in his style:

Elegia quoque Graecos provocamus, cuius mihi
tersus atque elegans maxime videtur auctor
Tibullus. sunt qui Propertium malint,³ Ovidius
utroque lascivior sicut durior Gallus.

¹The quotations from the Corpus Tibullianum which appear in this thesis are taken from the Oxford Classical Text. Quotations from other classical authors are taken from the appropriate volumes of the Loeb Classical Library.

²Ovid Amor. i. 15. 27-28.

³Quintilian Inst. Or. x. 1. 93.

When a person reads Tibullus' poetry he recognizes elements of the Latin love elegy: the elegiac metre, ideas arranged in distichs, the recurrence of a lady's name. Tibullus in one place stated the purpose of his poetry in these words: "ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero."¹

But another theme presents itself in the poetry of Tibullus. In his love elegies he writes also about his hearth, his vineyard, his orchard, about harvests, rustic worship, first fruits offered to a god, a scarecrow in the garden, and flocks and herds. In his Literary History of Rome, J. W. Duff writes: "The charm of Tibullus lies in the winning simplicity, lucidity, and smoothness of verse which he weds to the warm outpourings of his passion and to his joy in the country. . . . He is enamoured of Delia and of Nemesis, but he is as truly enamored of the country. . . ."² H. J. Rose in his Handbook of Latin Literature comments upon Tibullus' treatment of the rural theme by saying that the poet's frequent references to and descriptions of country life ring true.³ The French author Hubaux states that Tibullus' love for shepherds is even more convincing than that of Vergil for the herdsmen in his *Bucolics*: "Si l'on devait ranger les poètes bucoliques latins d'après l'amour plus ou moins sincère qu'ils ont éprouvé pour l'existence

¹ ii. 4. 19.

² J. W. Duff, A Literary History of Rome, ed. A. M. Duff (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1960), p. 408.

³ H. J. Rose, A Handbook of Latin Literature (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1960), p. 287.

du berger, il n'est pas douteux qu'il faudrait placer Tibulle avant Virgile,"¹ W. Y. Sellar says ". . . no other poet, with the exception of Virgil, is so possessed by the spirit of Italy, the love of the country and of the labour of the fields, and the piety associated with that sentiment."² While these authors acknowledge Tibullus' love of the country and for shepherds, they do not treat this aspect in detail, and they, except for Hubaux, have more to say about Tibullus' amatory theme than of his rustic theme.

The purpose of this study is to examine the description of rural life in the poetry of Tibullus, with special reference to those passages which reveal him as a husbandman and a shepherd, which show him to be an active participant in the religious life of a rural community, and which disclose his love for the country. We shall pass over Tibullus' amatory verse except for the passages in which he reveals this other side of his nature and his thinking. This study has been made both because Tibullus' interest in describing the rural scene is sufficiently evident to warrant a study of its own and because the non-amatory theme in his poetry does not seem to this writer to have been given the attention it deserves.

It is agreed that next to nothing is known about the life of the historic personality, Albius Tibullus. A careful reading of the elegies

¹J. Hubaux, Les Thèmes Bucoliques dans la Poésie Latine, Tome XXIX of Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques, ed. M. Lamertin (Bruxelles: Académie Royale de Belgique, 1930), p. 142.

²W. Y. Sellar, The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age. Horace and the Elegiac Poets (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1899), p. 241.

of the Corpus Tibullianum reveals very little about the poet's life. The writer of this thesis is taking the position that in the two books of elegies Tibullus was writing about himself, the work he did and the life he lived on an estate which he owned in the country. Tibullus is not regarded here as one who has fallen into the convention one finds when a poet calls himself a husbandman or a shepherd. The name Tibullus is used for the poet who called himself friend and military companion of Messalla, and wrote of himself as the husbandman who planted vines and fruit trees, the herdsman who rescued a stray kid or lamb.

It has been mentioned above that the amatory theme of Tibullus' verse will be passed over except when passages therein reveal that the country was important to Tibullus. Parts of Tibullus' poems have been taken out of context with the intention of demonstrating the rustic content of the poems, and not to show the relationship of that content either to the structure of individual elegies or to the whole of the amatory theme. There are instances, for example, where Tibullus the lover shows himself at the same moment to be Tibullus the shepherd at heart, or again where Tibullus the lover reveals himself as landowner and host on his country estate to an important guest. Principles at work in the matter of love he shows to be similar to those forces of Nature which he has observed in the out-of-doors. Passages of the poems dealing with love which reveal the importance of the country scene to Tibullus have been cited in order to create a portrait of Tibullus as a rustic.

Tibullus' love for the country and his faithfulness in describing it resulted from his having lived there most of his life. He himself was a shepherd and therefore showed that he had a certain empathy with other

herdsmen. Tibullus' worship of and sacrifices to the rural deities was a natural expression of his religious feelings because this was the tradition into which he had been born and which he chose to carry on. Tibullus' life as a husbandman and a herdsman, his devotion to the gods of the country, his joy in the countryside in times of peace and his description of the rural scene are the subject matter of this thesis. We shall look first at the poet as husbandman-herdsman, next at his religion, then at his view of the Golden Age, and finally at some of the words he uses to reveal that a poet of his disposition and experience needed a second theme, that is, a theme other than that of love poetry in which his genius could find expression. Tibullus made the poetry of love his major theme. He sang also of the country: rura cano.¹

¹ii. 1. 37.

CHAPTER II

TIBULLUS: HUSBANDMAN-HERDSMAN

ipse seram teneras maturo tempore uites
rusticus et facili grandia poma manu: (i. l. 7-8)

non agnamue sinu pigeat fetumue capellae
desertum oblita matre referre domun. (i. l. 31-32)

Tibullus was the owner of a farm. It was not a large farm. In his day it was not as prosperous as it once had been. He described it as small: "parua seges satis est."¹ The fact that he required only one shepherd² to tend his flock indicated the limited size of his estate.³ The poet admitted that a small lamb was sufficient expiation for his meagre plot.⁴ He described a well-to-do farmer as one who had a band of slave-children (or of slaves) upon his farm.⁵ Tibullus himself, on the other hand, mentions a babbling slave-child⁶ indicating that he may have had a family of slaves on his farm, but nowhere does he indicate that the number of his own slaves was large. The poet, however, had no ambition to own more than he had, to own as much as his grandfather had

¹i. l. 43

²Ibid., 35.

³Cf. J. P. Postgate (ed.), Selections from Tibullus and Others (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1903), p. 70, where the author says: "One shepherd marks a small estate."

⁴i. l. 22: "nunc agna exigui est hostia parua soli."

⁵ii. l. 23.

⁶i. 5. 25-26: "consuescet amantes/garrulus in dominae ludere uerna sinu."

possessed, for example:

non ego diuitias patrum fructusque requiro,
quos tulit antiquo condita messis auo. (i. 1. 41-42)

Throughout I. 1 Tibullus contrasts the active life of a professional soldier with the quiet life of a husbandman-herdsman.¹ Tibullus chose the latter. It was neither cowardice nor evasion of military responsibility, however, which led him to this choice, and which prompted him to write, in another poem, "alius sit fortis in armis, / sternat et aduersos Marte fauente duces."² The honors won by Messalla in Aquitania were gained with his help: "non sine me est tibi partus honos."³ And in an epitaph suggested for himself, Tibullus indicated his willingness to follow Messalla anywhere on land or on sea, even if it meant death for him:

HIC IACET IMMITI CONSUMPTVS MORTE TIBVLLVS,
MESSALLAM TERRA DVM SEQVITVRVE MARI.
(i. 3. 55-56)

It was the mild disposition of the man, the gentleness which caused his heart to tremble whenever he heard the war trumpet's military signals,⁴ which made him happy to live on his country estate. It was that gentleness which caused Tibullus to desire the security of his hearth,⁵ and to choose the peaceful life of a husbandman and a herdsman.⁶

¹verses 1-6; 25-26; 75-78.

²i. 10. 29-30.

³Ibid., 7. 9.

⁴Ibid., 10. 12: "nec audissem corde micante tubam."

⁵Ibid., 1. 6: "dum meus adsiduo luceat igne focus."

⁶Ibid., 7-8; 31-32.

Tibullus the landowner had the skill and the practical knowledge of a farmer. When he described a rustic's work on the land as hard work,¹ he wrote from experience. He had upturned the soil with the sturdy two-pronged hoe and followed the farmer's curved plough,² experiencing blistered hands and sunburned limbs while doing so. Still, he was willing to continue this work:

nec tamen interdum pudeat tenuisse bidentem
aut stimulo tardos increpuisse boues; (i. 1. 29-30)

He knew the right time for planting his vines and he set his fruit trees with skilful hand.⁴ Having done this hard work, he knew he must put in his garden the scarecrow Priapus, armed with sickle, to protect his fruit from the birds:

pomosisque ruber custos ponatur in hortis
terreat ut saeua falce Priapus aues. (i. 1. 17-18)

Tibullus was a good manager on his farm, because when the day for a rustic festival came round, the work on his estate could stop, and there was plenty of provender in the manger for his resting oxen:

luce sacra requiescat humus, requiescat arator,
et graue suspenso uomere cesset opus.
soluite uincla iugis: nunc ad praesepia debent
plena coronato stare boues capite. (ii. 1. 5-8)

Nor was Tibullus unaware of those engaged in the same kind of work as he. He had been in the company of ploughmen and knew their language:

¹i. 9. 8: "et durum terrae rusticus urget opus."

²ii. 3. 6-7.

³Ibid., 9-10.

⁴i. 1. 7-8.

uerba . . . aratoris rustica.¹ He had heard a farmer at the end of a busy day of ploughing, inspired by the country gods, adapt this same speech to metrics:

agricola adsiduo primum satiatus aratro
cantauit certo rustica uerba pede. (ii. 1. 51-52)

He was familiar with his neighbors' habits, and when he wrote

rusticus e lucoque uehit, male sobrius ipse,
uxorem plaustro progeniemque domum.-- (i. 10. 51-52)

perhaps he visualized a scene in which a faithful wife had to take over the reins to get her husband and children safely home at night!²

We have seen that Tibullus, as husbandman, cultivated vines. Since he describes the must in his vats as "candida"³ we can deduce that the grapes he grew were light in color,⁴ or that before the grapes were crushed, the skins, pulp and seeds had been removed. His fruit orchard contained trees of select strain which produced sweet fruits: "dulcia poma/Delia selectis detrahat arboribus."⁵ During the late Republic and early Empire, there was an increase in the number of fruit orchards in Italy. Native fruits were improved and foreign fruits were introduced

¹ii. 3. 4.

²See G. G. Ramsay, Selections from Tibullus and Propertius (3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), pp. 155-56, where he says that if the rustic himself were male sobrius, "it is to be hoped that his wife, or some other member of the family, held the reins."

³i. 5. 24.

⁴See Postgate, op. cit., p. 84, for the idea that Tibullus' estate produced white wine.

⁵Ibid., 5. 31-32.

and naturalized.¹ Tibullus refers to this introduction of fruits from other countries in his hymn of praise to Osiris:

pomaque non notis legit ab arboribus. (i. 7. 32)

The fact that Tibullus was a husbandman was reflected in the way he measured other men's wealth. One of his measures of a rich man was that that man possessed many sizeable plots (iugera) of cultivated soil.² He considered equal in value to the gems of India, whatever fields a strong countryman could plough:

nec tibi malueris, totum quaecumque per orbem
fortis arat ualido rusticus arua boue,
nec tibi, gemmarum quidquid felicibus Indis
nascitur, Eoi qua maris unda rubet. (ii. 2. 13-16)

The prize of a goat for a victorious poet was respected not only for the honor attached to the receiving of it, but for the fact that the award increased the farmer's wealth.

huic datus a pleno memorabile munus ouili
dux pecoris curtas auxerat hircus opes. (ii. 1. 57-58)

When writing of plunder, Tibullus says that the first of the things a despoiler desires is to possess many iugera on which to graze his countless sheep:

praedator cupit immensos obsidere campos,
ut multa innumera iugera pascat oue. (ii. 3. 41-42)

Tibullus thought of how the farmer might profit when a new public works project was undertaken or when Rome acquired a new province.

¹Peck, H. T. (ed.), Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities (New York: American Book Company, 1896), I, 46.

²A iugerum is a plot approximately three-fifths of an acre in size. See i. 1. 2.

In 1. 7 Tibullus mentions the road repaired by Messalla at the request of Octavian.¹ Anyone returning to Rome from Tusculum or from Alba Longa might praise that road, but the farmer is the only specific beneficiary whom Tibullus names.

nec taceat monumenta viae, quem Tuscula tellus
candidaque antiquo detinet Alba Lare.
namque opibus congesta tuis hic glarea dura
sternitur, hic apta iungitur arte silex.
te canet agricola, a magna cum uenerit urbe
serus, inoffensum rettuleritque pedem. (i. 7. 57-62)

In the same elegy, Tibullus gives prominence to Egypt, which had become a Roman province in August, B. C. 30.² He addresses the Nile, that great benefactor responsible for the fertility and productivity of Egypt's soil.³ When he said, "te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres, / arida nec pluuiο supplicat herba Ioui,"⁴ Tibullus visualizes that because of the bounty of a great river like the Nile, the farmer in Egypt can be assured of a crop and the herdsman confident of pasture for his flocks.

Whether Tibullus wrote about the benefits which came to mankind during a Golden Age, or in time of peace by the kindness of Osiris or as the gifts of the country gods, the advantages he mentioned in his poems were those which made life more profitable and comfortable for the

¹See K. F. Smith (ed.), The Elegies of Albius Tibullus (New York: American Book Company, 1913), pp. 35 and 339.

²Ramsay, op. cit., p. 135. See also M. Cary, A History of Rome (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1954), pp. 445-46.

³i. 7. 23-26.

⁴Ibid.

farmer. In Saturn's reign,¹ milk and honey came to the husbandman without his working for them. In peacetime,² nothing hindered the farmer from carrying on his work. He had but to sow, to wait for Nature to do its work, and then to reap. The first seven of Osiris' gifts³ to men were ones which would benefit the farmer: the plough and ploughing, the sowing of seed and gathering of fruit, the knowledge of pruning, the cultivation of vines, and the making of wine. Most of the innovations introduced by the gods of the country were those which benefited the husbandman: a new kind of diet, houses, the oxen's servitude, the wheel, orchards, irrigation, and the honey industry.⁴ Tibullus the husbandman was grateful for these things himself, and appreciated their value to others who were husbandmen.

Tibullus was a husbandman in his dream-world, when his imagination permitted him to escape reality. In I.5 he described an occasion when he was in Rome, disappointed and unhappy. He dreamed a dream:

rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos,
area dum messes sole calente teret,
aut mihi seruabit plenis in lintribus uuas
pressaue ueloci candida musta pede.
consuescet numerare pecus; consuescet amantis
garrulus in dominae ludere uerna sinu.
illa deo sciet agricolae pro uitibus uuam,
pro segete spicas, pro grege ferre dapem.
illa regat cunctos, illi sint omnia curae:
at iuuet in tota me nihil esse domo.

¹See infra, p. 46.

²Infra, p. 51.

³i. 7. 29-36. See also infra, p. 39.

⁴ii. 1. 37-50. See also infra, p. 36.

huc ueniet Messalla meus, cui dulcia poma
Delia selectis detrahat arboribus:
et, tantum uenerata uirum, hunc sedula curet,
huic paret atque epulas ipsa ministra gerat. (i. 5. 21-34)

The husbandman is back in the country. He dreams of harvested grain being winnowed on the threshingfloor in the hot sun. He dreams of his grapes, and the vintage in full troughs. He dreams of thank-offerings to the rustic gods. Messalla as his honored guest is to partake of the fruits from his trees. Tibullus, the dreaming husbandman, looks upon this scene with pride.

Tibullus' conception of Elysium and of Tartarus might be said to reflect the fact that he was a husbandman.¹ He conceived of the Elysian Fields as a place where a fruitful plain, which needs no cultivation, produces the spicy cassia.² The fields are full of perfumed roses.

fert casiam non culta seges, totosque per agros
floret odoratis terra benigna rosis; (i. 3. 61-62)

On the other hand, in the lower world, infra, there is neither sown field nor cultivated vine.

non seges est infra, non uinea culta, . . . (i. 10. 35)

Furthermore, that lower world, with blackness all about: flumina

¹The conception which he had was, of course, popular in the literature of antiquity.

²Cf. Vergil for a similar concept. To Vergil, Elysium consisted of joyous fields: "exinde per amplum/mittimur Elysium, et pauci laeta arva tenemus," (Aeneid vi. 743-744), pleasant glades: a moena virecta . . . Nemorum, (Ibid., 638-639), and a fragrant laurel grove: inter odoratum lauri nemus, (Ibid., 658).

nigra, niger Cerberus,¹ is hidden in an abyss of night:

at scelerata iacet sedes in nocte profunda
abditā, quam circum flumina nigra sonant. (i. 3. 67-68)

And what can grow without the light?

It is a truism to say that a farmer cannot carry on his work without hope. Tibullus knew that he, as a husbandman, had to have hope.

nec Spes destituat sed frugum semper aceruos
praebeat et pleno pingua musta lacu. (i. 1. 9-10)

Personified Hope--the goddess--adding her power to his work (seram)² and his dutifulness to the gods (ueneror)³ would give bountiful harvests of corn and of wine. In another place Tibullus wrote,

spes alit agricolas, spes sulcis credit aratis
semina quae magno faenore reddat ager: (ii. 6. 21-22)

Tibullus had been encouraged each year when he saw the earth lay aside its golden harvest: "rura ferunt messes, calidi cum sideris aestu/deponit flauas annua terra comas."⁴ He had entrusted seeds to be ploughed furrows. His fields had repaid those seeds with profit. He had been faithful in offering the first fruits of the season to the farmer's god.

et quodcumque mihi pomum nouus educat annus,
libatum agricolae ponitur ante deo. (i. 1. 13-14)

¹i. 3. 68, 71.

²Ibid., 1. 7.

³Ibid., 11.

⁴ii. 1. 47-48.

Tibullus was a herdsman as well as a husbandman. He had oxen for ploughing.¹ He owned sheep and goats.² He had one shepherd on his farm,³ but this did not prevent his doing the work of a shepherd himself. In pity for a stray lamb or for a kid forgotten by its mother, he would not fail to carry either home in the crook of his arm:

non agnamue sinu pigeat fetumue capellae
desertum oblita matre referre domum. (1. 1. 31-32)

His flock was not big. As he called his plot of ground a meagre one, exiguum solum,⁴ so did he estimate the size of his flock: exiguum pecus.⁵

Tibullus was a faithful shepherd, and a good one. He loved his sheep for their intrinsic worth and for their beauty. In 1. 5, he wrote, "consuescet numerare pecus; . . ."⁶ Tibullus knew what it was to count his sheep, not to reckon their material value to himself, but to satisfy himself that each animal in the flock was present. Tibullus delighted in the shining whiteness of his sheep. When he wrote, "niueae candidus agnus ouis,"⁷ he took pleasure in visualizing a shining-white lamb

¹See supra, p. 8.

²i. 1. 31-32.

³Ibid., 35.

⁴Ibid., 22.

⁵Ibid., 33.

⁶Ibid., 5. 25.

⁷ii. 5. 38.

beside its snowy-white mother. He records that the feminine tasks of spinning and weaving had their origin in the soft fleece produced by a shining ewe: "molle gerit tergo lucida uellus ouis."¹ And when Tibullus writes:

o pereat quicumque legit uiridesque smaragdos
et niueam Tyrio murice tingit ouem, (ii, 4. 27-28)

he is condemning the man who would change that snowy whiteness to another hue. When he uses the ewe's name for the wool itself, he is lamenting the fact that when woolen garments are made and dyed, the animal has been destroyed forever with respect to her original beauty.

Tibullus was aware of the dangers to his flock. The heat of Sirius, the Dogstar,² was something to be avoided for his own comfort.

sed Canis aestiuos ortus uitare sub umbra
arboris ad riuos praetereuntis aquae. (i. 1. 27-28)

The shepherd knew that heat had to be avoided for the sake of his sheep, too. He knew from experience that a resting place near running water, beneath the shade of a tree--often an old tree, arboris antiquae . . . umbra³--offered them best protection. He realized that a shepherd occasionally found himself on a lonely mountain, where his sheep would be vulnerable to the dangers round about.⁴ This shepherd had observed a stone on a mountainside and knew it for a thing devoid of feeling: "quam mallem in gelidis montibus esse lapis, . . ."⁵ Perhaps one of his lambs

¹Ibid., 1. 62.

²The Greeks called it *σεῖριος*, the Scorcher.

³ii. 5. 96.

⁴i. 2. 72: in solito . . . monte.

⁵ii. 4. 7-10.

had fallen against such a rock, or a ewe had had her wool entangled in its jagged edge. Sometimes he slept among his sheep: "somnumque petebat/securus uarias dux gregis inter oues."¹ This could have been in the lambing season at which time the ewes were the shepherd's special care. Wolves and thieves Tibullus recognized as enemies of his flock. "At uos exiguo pecori, furesque lupique, /parcite," he warned.² And when the poet describes the ritual of the Ambarvalia³ he is careful to include a prayer for the safety of his lambs:

neu timeat celeres tardior agna lupos. (ii. 1. 20)

On two separate occasions, when life for Tibullus was unhappy and when his circumstances were hard to endure, he indicated his desire to return to his flocks and herds.⁴ In I. 2 Tibullus expressed a wish to be able to yoke his oxen and to lead his flock to pasture on a solitary mountain.

ipse boues mea si tecum modo Delia possim
iungere et in solito pascere monte pecus. (i. 2. 71-72)

¹i. 10. 9-10. In this poem Tibullus looked back to a peaceful age when a quiet countryside was a safe place for a shepherd to spend the night with his sheep out upon the hills. No doubt before he had been drawn into conflict himself, (verse 13), he had spent many such a night with his flocks on or near the estate he had inherited from his grandfather.

²i. 1. 33-34.

³See infra, pp. 34 f.

⁴See supra, p. 4, for an explanation of the use in this thesis of passages from Tibullus' amatory verse to portray the poet as a rustic.

In I. 10 Tibullus himself was drawn to war.¹ However, he had no aspirations for fame because of military achievement. His choice was to be a shepherd and to see a son engaged in the same occupation: "ipse suas sectatur oues, at filius agnos, // sic ego sim. . . ."² It was important that the shepherd keep special watch over the ewes, because their well-being guaranteed continuation of the flock. The fact that the son was a shepherd too, promised continuation of sheep-raising as part of the work on his farm.

Tibullus was a close observer of Nature. Often when he wanted to illustrate a point, he drew analogies from Nature. His life as a shepherd afforded him both time and opportunity for such observation.

Tibullus had watched the sun in its daily course.

 quaque patent ortus et qua fluitantibus undis
 Solis anhelantes abluunt amnis equos. (ii. 5. 59-60)

He, like other poets, pictures the East lying open in the morning, and in evening Ocean washing the Sun's steeds in its flowing waves. Of Dawn opening up her doors to let the rising sun through, Ovid wrote, ". . . ecce vigil rutilo patefecit ab ortu/purpureas Aurora fores et plena rosarum/atria: . . ."³ And Vergil thought of the sun's setting as Tibullus did: "tum Sol. . . cum/praecipitem Oceani rubro lavit aequore currum."⁴ Having watched night fall, Tibullus was able to

¹i. 10. 13.

²Ibid., 41, 43.

³Ovid Met. ii. 112-114. See Postgate, op. cit., p. 131, where the author points to this parallelism of ideas in Tibullus and in Ovid.

⁴Vergil Georgics iii. 357-359.

describe it in this beautiful vignette.

. . . iam Nox iungit equos, currumque sequuntur
matris lasciuo sidera fulua choro,
postque uenit tacitus furuis circumdatus alis
Somnus et incerto Somnia nigra pede. (ii. 1. 87-90)

Nor had he missed the rainbow:

. . . praetexens picta ferrugine caelum
uenturam amiciat imbrifer arcus aquam. (i. 4. 43-44)

Covering the sky with painted gloom, the rainbow was a portent of a coming storm. This meant danger and difficulty for his sheep. To us as to the Hebrews a rainbow is a promise of better weather.¹ To the Greeks and to the Romans it was an omen of ill. Homer mentioned the portent of a rainbow:

. . . πορφυρέην ἱρίν θνητοῖσι τανύσση
Ζεὺς ἐξ οὐρανόθεν, τέρας ἔμμεναι ἢ πολέμοιο,
ἢ καὶ χειμῶνος δυσθαλπέος ὅς ῥά τε ἔργων
ἄνθρώπους ἀνέπαυσεν ἐπὶ χθονί, μῆλα δὲ κήδεϊ.²

It should be noted that the same dark, almost ominous hue is inherent in the meaning of Homer's adjective πορφυρέην and of Tibullus' noun ferrugo.³ Both Homer and Tibullus realized that one group of men and animals affected by a severe storm are shepherds and their sheep.

Tibullus the shepherd was familiar with rain. He knew that the rain which accompanied a south wind was a cold rain: "gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster."⁴ He had seen the rain lashing against a

¹See Smith, op. cit., p. 277 for this idea.

²Homer Iliad xvii. 547-550.

³Cf. Smith, op. cit., p. 277, where the author puts forward this idea.

⁴i. 1. 47.

building, while lightning flashed above, and knew that these were elements fierce enough to wish against a door invincible to his complaints: "iauna, . . . te verberet imber, /te Iouis imperio fulmina missa petant."¹ On the other hand, Tibullus knew how shepherds depended upon rain for grazing land for their sheep,² and was grateful for it. And the sound of rain was pleasing to him: . . . imbre iuuante.³

Tibullus' analogies were from Nature.⁴ In 1.4 the poet puts words of advice to lovers into the mouth of Priapus, who here assumes the role of magister amoris.⁵ A lover tempted to become weary⁶ in winning a loved one is reminded that in Nature, forces work slowly, though surely:

longa dies homini docuit parere leones,
longa dies molli saxa peredit aqua;
annus in apricis maturat collibus uvas. (i. 4. 17-19)

The shepherd had considered the brutal disposition of wild beasts -- be they lions, the fiercest of animals, or wolves, dreaddest of the sheep's enemies. He had thought of how slowly water eats its way through rock. He had noticed that grapes ripen gradually, no matter how hot the sun,

¹Ibid., 2. 7-8.

²See Supra, p. 11.

³i. 1. 48.

⁴For an explanation of the use of a passage from Tibullus' amatory verse to portray the poet as a rustic, see supra, p. 4.

⁵See Smith, op. cit., p. 263.

⁶i. 4. 15-16.

or how sunny the hill. The lover is warned that youth passes, its bloom fades, and time does not stand still.¹ So it is in Nature:

quam cito purpureos deperdit terra colores,
quam cito formosas populus alta comas,
quam iacet, infirmae uenere ubi fata senectae,
qui prior Eleo est carcere missus equus. (i. 4. 29-32)

Tibullus had seen the flowers quickly blossom into full color, fade and die. He had seen the tall poplars lose their lovely foliage. He had observed how a horse grows to full strength, fulfils its purpose and is overtaken by old age. The lover is told that he of whom the Muses sing will live forever: "dum robora tellus, /dum caelum stellas, dum uehet amnis aquas."² Tibullus had sat beneath the oak for its shade. He had studied the stars in the heavens. He had watched the stream of a river flow endlessly by. He and his sheep had been refreshed by its waters. These things he believed would last forever.

Tibullus is a herdsman when he chooses a story for the telling. In I. 3 the poet gives a catalogue of the condemned.³ He includes the raging Fury, Tisiphone; the seducer Ixion, incessantly devoured by vultures; the filicide Tantalus, forever tormented by thirst; the murdering daughters of Danaus, everlastingly carrying water in leaky jars. He deals with each very briefly, in a distich. However, when he mentions Admetus and Apollo in II. 3, he tells a tale ten times the length.⁴

¹Ibid., 27-28.

²Ibid., 65-66.

³i. 3. 69-80.

⁴ii. 3. 11-28. See also infra, pp. 38 f.

And this is a tale of Apollo as herdsman. The god leads bulls to pasture, drives cows from their stalls, makes cheese from milk, carries calves in his arms, has his singing interrupted by the lowing of heifers.

In II. 5 Tibullus describes a pastoral community which was later to become the city of Rome. He mentions pastoral deities and a shepherd, he includes a short dramatic scene with pastoral theme, and all of this he sets before a backdrop of pastoral scenery.

Romulus aeternae nondum formauerat urbis
moenia, consorti non habitanda Remo;
sed tunc pascebant herbosa Palatia uaccae
et stabant humiles in Iouis arce casae.
lacte madens illic suberat Pan ilicis umbrae
et facta agresti lignea falce Pales,
pendebatque uagi pastoris in arbore uotum
garrula siluestri fistula sacra deo
fistula cui semper decrescit harundinis ordo
nam calamus cera iungitur usque minor.
at qua Velabri regio patet, ire solebat
exiguus pulsa per uada linter aqua.
illa saepe gregis diti placitura magistro
ad iuuenem festa est uecta puella die,
cum qua fecundi redierunt munera ruris,
caseus et niueae candidus agnus ouis. (ii. 5.23-38)

To complete this picture it is necessary to quote two verses from the Sibyl's prophecy farther on in the elegy.

carpite nunc, tauri, de septem montibus herbas,
dum licet: hic magnae iam locus urbis erit. (ii. 5.55-56)

Tibullus goes back to that very early period when Rome was not yet a city. He mentions the Palatine, which ancient tradition marked and archaeological evidence has confirmed as the oldest core of what was to become Rome.¹ And he mentions the seven hills. He could well have had in mind a συνολκισμός, of the Palatine and the Esquiline

¹F. Altheim, A History of Roman Religion, trans. H. Mattingly (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1938), p. 93.

communities and their suburbs, such as that to which Altheim refers.¹ In a συνολκισμός, Altheim points out, there is no idea of city-settlement. Tibullus wrote only that the seven hills soon would be the site of a great city.² Furthermore, Altheim indicates that in this union (συνολκισμός), carried out for religious and political reasons, there is no idea of a defining city wall. Tibullus said that Romulus had not yet traced the walls of the eternal city. The seven hills which Tibullus mentions were undoubtedly those seven montes to which offerings were made at the festival of the Septimontium.³ Tibullus, in referring to that time before Romulus had matured to manhood, points to the legendary days when Latium was inhabited by shepherds. Varro had written earlier, "Quis Faustulum nescit pastorem fuisse nutricium, qui Romulum et Remum educavit?"⁴ The period of history then, is a pastoral age. The deities, too, are pastoral. Arcadian Pan is here, beneath his own ilex, and moist with shepherds' offerings of milk. The fistula or σύριξ, reed-pipe of his own invention, hangs upon a tree, a votive offering of some shepherd who hoped to satisfy the god and so have his own wishes granted.⁵ Pales is present, in wooden likeness, fashioned by a rustic's

¹Ibid., pp. 99-100.

²ii. 5. 56.

³Altheim, op. cit., p. 99, where the seven cited are the Palatium and the Cermalus, the two points of the Palatine; the Velia; then Fagutal, Cispian, and Oppian, the heights of the Esquiline; and the Caelian in the South.

⁴Varro Res Rusticae ii. 1. 9.

⁵See C. Bailey, Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1932), pp. 83-84, for this idea of

billhook. The name of this Etruscan deity,¹ goddess of shepherds, is linked with that of the Palatine. The shepherds made her April festival the birthday of Rome.² In calling his shepherd uagus pastor, Tibullus gives us a hint as to the nomadic character of the life of a shepherd in ancient Italy.³ The sheep had to be spared extremes of heat and cold. Varro, for example, records that when he kept flocks, he found it necessary to winter them in Apulia and to take them in summer to the mountains of Reate.⁴ Tibullus closes the long passage cited above,⁵ by describing a maiden on a holiday sailing through the Tiber-flooded Velabrum to see her shepherd-lover. This young man was wealthy and generous too, because he sent her home with gifts from his farm: a cheese and a white male lamb. The whole account⁶ Tibullus colors with pastoral scenery: cows grazing upon the Palatine, bulls plucking grass from the seven hills, the green of grass, the shade of trees. Tibullus records Rome's early beginnings from a shepherd's point of view.

In yet another sphere Tibullus showed himself to be both husbandman and herdsman: in his worship of, and sacrifice to the gods. Tibullus

bribery in religion.

¹Altheim, op. cit., p. 136.

²Varro Res Rusticae ii. 1. 9.

³See Smith, op. cit., p. 453, for this idea.

⁴Varro Res Rusticae ii. 2. 9.

⁵See supra, p. 22. The specific passage in Tibullus is ii. 5. 33-38.

⁶ii. 5. 23-38; 55-56.

the husbandman, in gratitude to the god of farmers, had offered to him the first fruits of each season.¹ Tibullus the shepherd dutifully offered lambs from his flock to the Lares,² and at the Ambarvalia.³ He took part annually in Pales' festival, the Palilia,⁴ and hoped that this tradition would be carried on by other shepherds.⁵ A discussion of the gods which Tibullus worshipped, his attitude towards those gods, the forms his worship took, and the nature of his sacrifices are the subject of the next chapter.

¹i. 1. 13-14.

²Ibid., 22.

³ii. 1. 15.

⁴i. 1. 35-36.

⁵ii. 5. 87-88.

CHAPTER III

TIBULLUS AND THE GODS

rura cano rurisque deos . . . (11.1.37)

nam ueneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris
seu uetus in triuio florida sertā lapis: (i.1.11-12)

We have found that Tibullus was a husbandman and a herdsman by inheritance and vocation, and that his preference for life in the country among flocks and herds was reflected in many areas of his thinking, including his religion. Because Tibullus is a poet of Latin love elegies we should expect to find that the love deities, Venus and Amor, are those which he honors above others. We shall see, however, that his gratitude was expressed towards the numina he had known since childhood, his sacrifices were offered to the rustic gods, and his praises were sung to the gods of the country.

Worship of the spirits of the household and participation in the rituals of the fields were expressions of early Roman religion associated with the people of an agricultural community.¹ Tibullus worshipped the numina of the household cult and took part in agricultural festivals.

In Elegy 10 of Book I, probably the first poem Tibullus wrote,²

¹See S. A. Cook et al. (eds.), The Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. VIII, chap. xiv, p. 435: "Besides the cult of the 'spirits' in the house the early Roman was concerned as a farmer with many forms of ritual in the fields."

²See M. Pöschhölzer, Tibulle et les Auteurs du Corpus Tibullianum (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles-Lettres," 1924), Intro., where the author adopts A. Cartault's chronology for the order of the poems in Book I: 10 (written at the end of 31 B. C. or in 30 B. C.); 2 (end of 30 or 29 B. C.); 3 and 1 (in 29 B. C.); 4, 5, and 6 (from 29-27 B. C.); 7, 8, and 9 (27-26 B. C.).

the poet reveals quite clearly his relationship to the Lares, spirits of the household.¹ He addresses them with confidence because he has known them all his life; he invokes them for protection because the protection of men from their enemies was one of the special functions of the Lares,² and he promises them appropriate thank-offerings if they answer his prayer.

But Lares of my fathers, guard me: and indeed you did support me when as a young boy I ran about your feet. Let it not shame you to have been fashioned from an ancient tree trunk: in this form you inhabited the home of my old grandfather.

In those days men kept faith better, when a god of wood, meanly attired, stood in a narrow shrine.

This god was appeased, whether a man poured a libation of grape juice, or gave corn-ear garlands to his holy hair: and someone, his wish fulfilled, brought cakes, in person and behind, his small daughter, companion dedicant, bore pure honeycomb.

But Lares, ward off from us weapons of bronze
[and if you keep me from war, there will be for you]³
a pig, rustic victim from my full sty.

This shall I follow, clad in clean clothes, and I shall bear a basket bound with myrtle,⁴ my own head with myrtle tied. So may I please you: . . .

These were the gods of whom he had been aware from earliest childhood: when he was young (tener), and at that age when little boys are

¹See C. Bailey, Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1932), p. 50, where the author states that the Lar Familiaris, guardian of the household, was one of the several spirits of the holding.

²See Postgate, op. cit., p. 101.

³Smith, op. cit., p. 380, where the author states that Sculze interprets what might have been in the lacuna by supplying erit uobis with hostia, and makes que = "and then."

⁴i. 10. 15-29.

on the run (cursarem) and seem never to walk. The Lares, though crudely fashioned from a stump, had protected his grandfather's house. They had at that time been placated with gifts from the land: juice of the grape and ears of corn, cakes of meal and the honeycomb. Now Tibullus, a landowner with stock of his own, is ready to offer a sacrifice appropriate to the Lares if they spare him, the sacrifice of a pig. The myrtle he promises to bear and to entwine about his head is a plant sacred to the Lares.¹

Incense was another gift offered to the Lares. Bailey points out that incense was used in offerings, having been introduced after the Roman Empire had opened up commerce with the East.² Wine was often mentioned in connection with incense in sacrifices.³ Tibullus expressed the desire upon one occasion for the opportunity to make regular offerings of incense to his ancient Lar: "at mihi contingat . . . reddereque antiquo menstrua tura Lari."⁴

This wish is interesting apart from the appropriateness of the gift. During an illness, Tibullus prayed to Isis for help,⁵ both because

¹In Horace's Ode iii. 23 the poet suggests to country-born Phidyle that she please the Lares with incense, this year's corn, and a greedy sow: "si ture placaris et horna/fruge Lares avidaque porca," (verses 3-4); later we see the maid wreathing her small gods with rosemary and fragile myrtle: "parvos coronantem marino/rore deos fragilique myrto." (verses 15-16).

²See Bailey, op. cit., p. 78.

³Cato De Agri Cultura 134: "Ture vino Iano Iovi praefato . . ."

⁴i. 3. 33-34.

⁵Ibid., 27-28.

he had seen votive tablets which bore testimony to her power to heal, and because Delia was a devotee of Isis.¹ However, Tibullus did not have much confidence in Isis: "quid tua nunc Isis mihi, Delia, quid mihi prosunt/illa tua totiens aera repulsa manu, . . . ?"² Rather, he wished to sacrifice to the Lar he knew of old. Furthermore, Isis was identified with Venus and honored by women who made love their profession.³ So here we find Tibullus turning from a love deity, upon whom he could not depend, to a familiar spirit of the household in whom he had confidence.

Still another offering to the Lares was a gift of flowers. In II. 1 Tibullus shows us a slave boy making a crown of springtime flowers and placing it upon the Lares, his protectors:⁴

rure puer uerno primum de flore coronam
fecit et antiquis imposuit Laribus. (ii. 1. 59-60)

With respect to this gift of flowers, Ovid adds that if a man could add violets to the wreaths, he was rich.⁵

Tibullus acknowledged the Lares as guardians of his fields and

¹Ibid., 29-32. See also Ramsay, op. cit., p. 124.

²i. 3. 23-24.

³See F. Cumont, The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1911), p. 90.

⁴See Smith, op. cit., p. 404: "The Lares, . . . extended their protection to the entire household . . . which included the slaves."

⁵Ovid Fasti i. 345-346: "si quis erat, factis prati de flore coronis/qui posset violas addere, dives erat." This point is mentioned by Bailey, op. cit., p. 78.

offered them gifts:

uos quoque, felicitis quondam, nunc pauperis agri
custodes, fertis munera uestra, Lares.
tunc uitula innumeros lustrabat caesa iuuenos:
nunc agna exigui est hostia parua soli.
agna cadet uobis, quam circum rustica pubes
clamet 'io messes et bona uina date.' (i. 1. 19-24)

He says that the Lares now are, recalls that in the past they have been, and promises that in the future they will be recipients of gifts from his estate.

Only once does Tibullus mention the Penates by name:

at mihi contingat patrios celebrare Penates. (i. 3. 33)

The Penates were the guardians of the storecupboard in the house, and their name was often used simply to mean "home." At a time when Tibullus was away from home, it was natural for him to want to approach the Penates, familiar to him because, like the Lares, they were patrii --deities of his forefathers. Surely he had them in mind again when in I. 1 he wrote

adsitis, diui, neu uos e paupere mensa
dona nec e puris spernite fictilibus. -- (i. 1. 37-38)

The Penates, and Vesta, were the numina which received a special offering from each meal, perhaps a portion of the sacred salt cake, mola salsa, which was laid on a patella--in this case a patella of earthenware (dona e puris fictilibus)--and was cast into the fire as a sacrifice.

Tibullus never mentions Vesta by name, but is almost certain that the "hearth-spirit" was in his mind when he wrote

me mea paupertas uita traducat inert
dum meus adsiduo luceat igne focus. (i. 1. 5-6)

Moderate circumstances (paupertas) and an inactive life (uita iners) would prove no deterrent to his enjoyment of living, but he did want to be assured of a hearth that glowed with a continual fire. To Tibullus as to the Romans of old, the hearth was the centre of family life. It represented source of warmth and assurance of sustenance; the fact that its fire was kept alive meant continuity of the life of the family.¹ To Tibullus this hope of continuity expressed by adsiduo igne was as important as the tradition inherent in the adjectives antiquus and patrius which he used in connection with the other household numina.²

Tibullus mentions one further spirit of the household, the numen called Genius, and the gifts offered to the Genius on special occasions. On the occasion of the birthday³ of a friend, Cornutus, the poet invites the Genius of Cornutus to be present to view its own honors. Nor is it to be present unadorned--but it is to have soft garlands on its hair, its brows are to distil with pure nard, its hunger is to be satisfied with cake of meal, its thirst quenched with wine:

ipse suos Genius adsit uisurus honores,
cui decorent sanctas mollia sarta comas.
illius puro destillent tempora nardo,
atque satur libo sit madeatque mero. (ii. 2. 5-8)

The same gifts are offered to the Genius of Messalla on the occasion of

¹See Bailey, op. cit., p. 49.

²i. 3. 33-34; and Ibid., 10. 15.

³Cf. Altheim, op. cit., p. 197, where the author says that the birthday, above all, is sacred to the Genius ("he who has begotten") because the denotation of the name emphasizes the result and conclusion as the decisive element, and the birthday is the day on which the pro-creation of man became manifest.

his birthday.¹

Tibullus called upon his gods in private but he also worshipped as a member of the community, taking part in rural festivals. In the distich quoted at the head of this chapter we read his declaration: "for I worship, whether a tree trunk abandoned in a field has floral garlands or there is a floral garland on an old stone at the crossroads."² Here Tibullus is likely recalling his participation in the Terminalia as one of the neighboring patresfamilia doing honor to Terminus.³ It is noteworthy that in the first two books of the Corpus Tibullianum, Tibullus nowhere mentions his father, although he does mention his grandfather,⁴ and his mother and his sister.⁵ Ponchont points out that Tibullus perhaps lost his father when he was young.⁶ If this is the case, Tibullus was the paterfamilias in his home, and as such, carried on priestly duties for his household, and whenever his household took part in community worship.

¹i. 7. 49-54.

²i. 1. 11-12.

³The similarity of expression in this couplet and in Ovid's distich in Fasti ii. 641-642 is marked: "Termine sive lapis, sive es defossus in agro/stipes, ab antiquis tu quoque numen habes." Here Ovid is describing the Terminalia.

⁴i. 10. 18; Ibid., 1. 42; and ii. 1. 2..

⁵i. 3. 5-7.

⁶See Ponchont, op. cit., Introduction, p. ix.

Another rural festival in which Tibullus participated regularly was the Parilia (or Palilia). This feast, celebrated in honor of Pales was believed to have been older than the foundation of Rome itself. A happy festival, at which no animal could be sacrificed, it was a rite observed by shepherds and husbandmen for the good of their flocks and herds.¹ Tibullus records:

hinc ego pastoremque meum lustrare quot annis
et placidam soleo spargere lacte Palem. (i. 1. 35-36)

Here the poet as husbandman and shepherd takes part personally in honoring Pales, and as faithful overseer of his estate, lustrates the one shepherd he has to tend his sheep. Milk was an offering especially pleasing to Pales, as Ovid tells us,² and on this occasion was offered, together with cakes of millet, to the rural goddess, mistress of shepherds. Fowler, though speaking of another festival, mentions that milk offerings are characteristic of a pastoral rather than an agricultural age and suggest an antiquity fully borne out by archeological evidence.³ This substantiates what Frazer says about the long tradition of the festival. Again in II. 5 Tibullus portrays a shepherd--any shepherd in an ideal age of peace and prosperity--celebrating his own festival to Pales,

¹ See (Sir) J. G. Frazer, Ovid's Fasti (Loeb edition; London: W. Heinemann Ltd., 1931), Appendix p. 411.

² Ovid Fasti iv. 721 ff.

³ See W. W. Fowler, Roman Ideas of Deity (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1914), p. 38, for this idea of the antiquity of the milk offering. Also, it should be remembered that the custom of offering milk antedates viticulture.

praying for safety for his flocks from their chief enemy, the wolf, building a fire and leaping through the purifying flames.¹

In the first elegy of Book II Tibullus describes at some length a ceremony of lustration of the fields. This festival is likely the Ambarvalia, celebrated in the Spring.² As paterfamilias he conducts the festival himself, stating the purpose of the ceremony at the outset: "We purify our crops and fields."³ As he had done in his private worship, Tibullus carried on the tradition of his grandfather in this public rural festival. Formerly he described the Lares and the Penates as patrii; here the ritual he follows is traditus.⁴

The occasion is a solemn one. "Whoever is here, let him speak no word of ill-omen; . . . let everything reflect a spirit of worship to the god," Tibullus warns.⁵ Nevertheless, a holiday mood prevails: Ceres and Bacchus have been invited, decked in holiday garb; the ground is to be at rest, the ploughman off duty; the plough is to be hung up and heavy work must cease; the oxen, unyoked, must stand, heads crowned, at a full manger; no woman dare continue her spinning. Then the procession begins. Only the chaste, clad in clean clothing, need enter

¹ii. 5. 87-90.

²See W. W. Fowler, "Note on the Country Festival in Tibullus II. 1," Classical Review, Vol. XXII, 1908, pp. 36 ff. (I am indebted to Dr. Fowler for the interpretation of ii. 1. 21-24 which he has given in this article. "

³ii. 1. 1.

⁴i. 10. 15; Ibid., 3. 33; ii. 1. 2.

⁵Ibid., 1, and 9.

the long line. The sacred lamb approaches an altar glistening with the blood of previously slain victims --perhaps the other two of the suove-taurilia. Now the prayers are offered to the traditional gods. "We purify our farms and the men who work them. Ward off evil from our boundaries; let our harvest contain no tares, let not the tardy lamb fear the swift wolf."¹ This ritual ended, the poet-priest looks forward with hope to a summer festival. The countryman, spruce (nitidus) because he is not working on the holy day, and confident that the crops will be good, will heap great logs to make a bonfire, and a band of slaves will build shelters of boughs.² The priest asks for an auspice. Tibullus' question, "uiden ut felicibus extis/significet placidos nuntia fibra deos?" creates a spirit of suspense.³ The signs are propitious; the fibres indicate that the gods will be gentle! Now a somewhat restrained holiday spirit gives way to noisy merriment: hilaritas. The poet-priest becomes the convivii dominus. He orders Falernian of an early year, and breaks the seal on some Chian: the day must be celebrated with wine. No restrictions now: "non festa luce madere/est rubor, errantes et male ferre pedes."⁴ "To Messalla's health," the host invites the

¹Ibid., 17-20.

²Tibullus mentions the construction of shelters by the draping of clothing (presumably over some kind of wooden framework) in ii. 5. 95-98. See W. W. Fowler, Roman Ideas of Deity, p. 474, where the author suggests that these two kinds of extemporised huts used at rustic festivals had some forgotten religious meaning.

³ii. 1. 25-26.

⁴Ibid., 29-30.

crowd, and bids his patron help him thank the country gods. The celebrants become quiet, the countryside grows still, dusk begins to fall, the embers of the great fire glow; the poet rises to recite the hymn (carmen nostrum) he has composed for the occasion:

Rura cano rurisque deos. his uita magistris¹

he begins, alternating dactyls and spondees.

If we cannot depend on Tibullus to furnish us with exact dates and details, we must credit him with conveying the spirit of an Italian agricultural festival,² for here we have Roman ritual, gaily decked deities, cessation of work and great merrymaking following hard upon one another.

The hymn itself³ ascribes to these gods the civilizing influences of houses for man to dwell in and the wheel to lighten man's work. When they ruled, orchards were planted, gardens irrigated, wine made, crops harvested. In the country the tiny bee manufactured honey; the farmer composed songs, piped tunes and executed the dance. In the country the sheep's woolly fleece provided women with tasks of spinning and weaving. And in the country Cupid was born and learned his bowman's art!

ipse quoque inter agros interque armenta Cupido
natus et indomitas dicitur inter equas
illic indocto primum se exercuit arcu: (ii. 1. 67-69)

Tibullus invites Amor to this country festival, because it is his

¹Ibid., 37.

²Cf. Fowler, op. cit., p. 80.

³ii. 1. 37-69.

birthright to be here. But the invitation is issued only after the poet has listed Amor's wiles¹ and warned him to set aside his weapons. Tibullus knew only too well Amor's harsh dealings with lovers: how he delighted in setting traps for men; and how futile it was for a lover to go against him, armed, when Amor issued orders.² Today, the love god must surrender his authority; today he is in the presence of the gods of the country. It is they who have the preeminence. Here Cupid can abide, only if he be undefended and unarmed.

sancte, veni dapibus festis, sed pone sagittas
et procul ardentem hinc precor abde faces. (ii. 1. 81-82)

Venus is the deity whom Tibullus mentions by name more than any other. He portrays her as instructress and disciplinarian of lovers,³ and the avenger of one whose deeds are harsh.⁴ On the one hand, when Venus delivered him from an unfaithful lover, Marathus, we find Tibullus expressing the wish to erect a votive inscription to her: faithfulness;⁵ on the other hand, we hear him stating that he must profane Venus before any other deity.⁶ (The reason for this outburst is that Nemesis' covetousness demands that Tibullus provide her with money, or remain an

¹Ibid., 71-76.

²Ibid., 4. 3-5; i. 6. 3-4, and 30.

³Ibid., 2. 19-22; Ibid., 8. 5. 6.

⁴Ibid., 28.

⁵Ibid., 9. 81-84.

⁶ii. 4. 24-26.

exclusus amator.) At one time he loved Venus and was grateful, at another he hated her and became rebellious. At best, then, we can say that Tibullus' relationship to the goddess was characterized by ambivalence.

Venus and Amor had their way with Apollo,¹ but Jupiter having banished this god from heaven and deprived him of his dignity, ordained that he should serve a mortal.² In this servitude, Apollo left shrine and priestly duties, dwelt in a little cot, and became herdsman to Admetus.³ His new life consisted in leading Admetus' bulls to pasture, driving his cows from their stalls, and when the occasion arose, carrying a calf through the fields (to his sister's embarrassment). Often he had his artistic songs interrupted by the lowing of heifers. His pastoral duties did not end here, for he taught the art of making cheese by mixing rennet with new milk until the milky substance became firm. And he showed men how to separate the curds from whey by using wicker baskets. Although love was the motive for this service,⁴ still the nature of Apollos' duties was pastoral. To illustrate his point of sacrifice for love, Tibullus could have used another example from the great store of legends from which he had to draw. Propertius, for example, Tibullus' fellow-elegist, cites Milanion's self-sacrifice for love of Atalanta, a sacrifice which involved his wandering in Parthenian caves, facing

¹Ibid., 3.28-30.

²Jupiter deposed him because Apollo had killed the Cyclops, manufacturers of the thunderbolts which had destroyed his son, Asclepius.

³Tibullus tells this story in ii.3.11-28.

⁴Ibid., 14.

shaggy beasts, and suffering upon the rocks of Arcady, struck by Hylaeus' club.¹ Here, Tibullus, husbandman-herdsman, chose to use this story of god-become-cowherd.

The seventh elegy of Book I Tibullus wrote to commemorate the birthday and the triumph in 27 B. C. of Messalla. In this poem Tibullus draws particular attention to Egypt, which not long before had become a Roman province.² Addressing the Nile, after referring to its inundations, he questions its sources and praises its bounty to the lands about it.

Nile pater, quanam possim te dicere causa
aut quibus in terris occuluisse caput?
te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres,
arida nec pluio supplicat herba Ioui. (i. 7. 23-26)

The manhood of Egypt (pubes barbara), he continues, sings the praises of the Nile and reveres Osiris, its Genius. The husbandman-poet in this elegy ascribes to Osiris, as earlier he had attributed to the gods of the country, a number of innovations advantageous to men who dwell on and work the land: the plough, and ploughing; the planting of seed, the gathering of hitherto unknown fruits, the training of vines, the practice of pruning.³ Then, like the Greeks,⁴ Tibullus identifies Osiris with Bacchus and lists the civilizing influences of wine: its powers to teach the arts of singing and the dance, to release from strain the farmer's

¹ Propertius i. 1, 9-16.

² Cf. supra, p. 11.

³ i. 7. 29-34.

⁴ Herodotus ii. 144: "Ὅσιρις δέ ἐστι Διόνυσος κατὰ Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν."

work-wearied heart, to give rest to men shackled by prisoners' chains.¹ He closes his panegyric with a description of Osiris clothed as Bacchus is traditionally represented,² his forehead crowned with ivy-berries (frons redimita corymbis), and dressed in a long saffron robe (lutea palla), and other garments of purple (Tyriae vestes).³ This Osiris, Genius of the great life-giving Nile, Tibullus invites to extol the Genius of his Messalla.⁴

Ceres is a deity to whom Tibullus is indebted each time he harvests a crop, and to her the grateful husbandman offers a crown of corn-ears from his farm:

flaua Ceres, tibi sit nostro de rure corona
spicea, quae templi pendeat ante fores; (i. 1. 15-16)

This Ceres is simply spirit of the birth and growth of corn, goddess of the corn-crop. In his first elegy of Book I, Tibullus places Ceres, guardian of crops, in close company with Priapus, that red garden god whose function, as often, is that of scarecrow:

pomosisque ruber custos ponatur in hortis
terreat ut saeva falce Priapus aves. (i. 1. 17-18)

Priapus is mentioned elsewhere as Bacchus' son.⁵ Bacchus, apart from

¹i. 7. 37-42.

²See Postgate, op. cit., p. 96.

³i. 7. 46-48.

⁴Ibid., 49-50.

⁵i. 4. 7.

his identification with Osiris as shown above, Tibullus names as planter of the vine.¹ Tibullus regards him as the agricultural spirit of the wine (and therefore in-dweller of the vats which hold the wine)² in the same way that he regards Ceres as the spirit of the growing corn. He has them both in mind, together with Pales, when in I. 5 he writes of offering gifts to the farmer's god,

illa deo sciet agricolae pro uitibus uuam,
pro segete spicas, pro grege ferre dapem. (i. 5. 27-28)

Since this term *agricola deus* is an indefinite one, and need not refer to the same deity in one instance as in another,³ the poet could intend it to be interpreted collectively, so that we might even, if boldly, translate the distich something like this:

She (Delia) will know how to bear to Bacchus (spirit of the vine) a grape cluster in return for his care of the vine; to Ceres (spirit of the corn) corn ears as reward for her nurturing of the crop; and to Pales (guardian-spirit of flocks) a feast for her protection of the flocks.

This trio of garden spirits, Ceres, Bacchus and Pales, were deities with whom Tibullus had much to do, and to each of them Tibullus was indebted. To each he gave a fitting place in his poetry.

Tibullus in private worship and in public ritual turned to the spirits of the fields and of the household as his forefathers had done.

¹ ii. 3. 63.

² Ibid., 64.

³ See Postgate, op. cit., p. 84.

This worship was marked by sincerity and confidence. As husbandman-herdsman, he was in debt to the gods of the crop and the vine and the flock and accordingly he offered these deities their due. The gods of the country he acknowledged as benefactors of all mankind and as such he praised them at length. The deities of love, as a poet of elegy, he mentioned often, but their dealings with him so often left him not altogether happy that his attitude towards them may best be described as ambivalent. Tibullus' gods were the gods of the country. In his religion Tibullus was a Roman and a rustic.

CHAPTER IV

TIBULLUS AND THE GOLDEN AGE

quam bene Saturno uiuebant rege, . . . (i. 3. 35)

We have seen that Tibullus, by his own admission, was a husbandman and a shepherd. We have also seen that he worshipped and made sacrifices to the rustic gods. A third thing we notice about Tibullus when reading his poetry, is that like others who wrote about rural life, he sometimes looked back to that first age of man, the Golden Age, when life was easier than in the Age of Iron.

The Boeotian poet Hesiod has given us a picture of rural life in Greece in the 8th century B. C.¹ A husbandman himself, this poet in his Works and Days recommends work as the best thing for men,² and gives advice to the peasant-farmer as to the best time of year in which to perform his various tasks.³ The poem suggests conditions of grave social distress in Boeotia at that time.⁴ It is in the midst of difficulties which affect him personally, that Hesiod looks back to a better era: a Golden Age, the first of the five ages of the world, when men knew no

¹Cf. J. B. Bury, A History of Greece (ed ed. rev.; London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1959), p. 107. See also H. J. Rose, A Handbook of Greek Literature (University Paperbacks 69; London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1964), p. 65.

²Hesiod Works and Days 314: τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι ἀμεινον.

³Ibid., 383-617.

⁴Cf. H. J. Rose, Handbook of Greek Literature, p. 58. See also Hesiod W. D. 176-178:

labor nor sorrow.¹

In Roman literature before Tibullus, Vergil in the Georgics sang of what made crops glad,² and pitying the rustic who knew not his way³ offered him much sound advice. Vergil, too, explaining that Jove had ordained no smooth path for husbandmen⁴ looked back to former, better days;⁵ later, he described a blissful life for farmers, such as had prevailed under Saturn;⁶ and in the Fourth Eclogue Vergil hailed the return of a Golden Age with the advent of a male child.

Tibullus' reference to the Golden Age is found in I. 3, where he begins his praise of that era of peace with the words: "How well men lived when Saturn reigned."⁷ There is evidence in other passages scattered throughout the two books of the Corpus Tibullianum with which we are dealing, that at other times too, Tibullus had a Golden Age in mind. Certainly the tenth poem of Book I begins as if this were the case. Deprecating the Age of Iron in which he lives, he writes that there were

¹Ibid., 110-120.

²Vergil Georgics i. 1.

³Ibid., 41.

⁴Ibid., 121-122.

⁵Ibid., 125: "ante Iovem nulli subigebant arva coloni;"

⁶Ibid., 2. 458-540.

⁷i. 3. 35-48.

no wars when men were willing to live in simplicity.¹ In this poem he longs for peace,² which was characteristic of the Golden Age. Further, in II. 5, Tibullus looks to Apollo to usher in a period of peace and prosperity.³ The life which he hopes for here, for himself and for his contemporaries, Tibullus describes in much the same way as Vergil in Georgics II portrays the life lived by a husbandman during Saturn's reign.⁴

Tibullus probably wrote I. 3 not long after his detention in Corcyra due to an illness contracted while he was accompanying Messalla to the East.⁵ At that time the poet was sick and away from home;⁶ he was apprehensive about dying;⁷ and he was lonely for his mother, his sister and Delia.⁸ In that frame of mind he looked back to a happier time when men lived well under Saturn.⁹ In almost everything he says

¹Ibid., 10. 1-8.

²Ibid., 45-52; 67-68.

³ii. 5. 79-100.

⁴Vergil Georgics ii. 532-540.

⁵See Smith, op. cit., p. 232.

⁶i. 3. 3.

⁷Ibid., 4.

⁸Ibid., 5-9.

⁹Here Tibullus writes of the Golden Age, a convention introduced into pastoral verse by Vergil in Eclogue IV. See W. W. Greg, Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1959),

about the Golden Age Tibullus reveals himself as one who loved the country and yearned after life there. This is Tibullus' description of the Golden Age:

quam bene Saturno uiuebant rege, priusquam
tellus in longas est patefacta uias!
nondum caeruleas pinus contempserat undas,
effusum uentis praebueratque sinum,
nec uagus ignotis repetens compendia terris
presserat externa nauita merce ratem.
illo non ualidus subiit iuga tempore taurus,
non domito frenos ore momordit equus,
non domus ulla fores habuit, non fixus in agris
qui regeret certis finibus arua, lapis.
ipsae mella dabant quercus, ultroque ferebant
obuia securis ubera lactis oues.
non acies, non ira fuit, non bella, nec ensem
immiti saeuus duxerat arte faber. (i. 3. 35-48)

In the Golden Age, men had not built roadways for commerce or for transport of troops;¹ men had not defied the sea in boats nor loaded craft with foreign wares in unknown lands in search of gain; they had not subjected the bull to the yoke nor the horse to the bit; they had not built doors on their houses nor marked out their boundaries with stones; Nature had offered men milk and honey without the asking; and men then knew nothing of war: its cause (ira), its instruments (enses), its organization (acies).

Why should a herdsman-husbandman like Tibullus, a husbandman who was comfortably off,² look back upon this kind of life as a

p. 16. See also comparison of Vergil's Fourth Eclogue with Tibullus i. 3. 35-48, infra, pp. 47 f.

¹It is conceivable that Tibullus had in mind military roads, the all-weather routes which let the Romans transport forces quickly into many parts of Italy. See Cary, op. cit., p. 125.

²i. 10. 26: e plena . . . porcus hara.

good life? First and last, it was a peaceful life. As a lover of the country he did not want to travel far afield--for war or for any other reason.¹ Next, as a Roman, he wanted at all costs to remain on land.² He lived off his land, needing no exotic foods nor fancy furnishings imported from across the seas;³ his animals were undoubtedly objects of his respect and his affection. (Men even today give names to their cows and their horses and speak to them accordingly.) To Tibullus or to anyone who lives in the country it is a good thing when a man's relationship with his neighbors is such that there is no need for barred doors nor boundary stones, or when his provisions come from a willing, bountiful Nature. This life in the Golden Age was indeed a life of peace, a life free from the strife of sea-voyages, of cupidity, of work, of contention with neighbors, of war. Tibullus looked back with longing upon such a life.⁴

While reading this passage in Tibullus, one cannot but notice marked parallels with certain words and phrases in Vergil's Fourth Eclogue. Vergil announces the return of Saturn's reign: redeunt Saturnia regna.⁵ The benefits of the age do not come all at once,

¹Ibid., 1.49-52.

²Cf. Columella i. Praefat. 8: Terrestre animal homo.

³Cf. i. 5.31-32 where Delia (was imagined to have) plucked fruit from Tibullus' trees for their guest, Messalla. See also 1.10.8, where beechen cups are mentioned. These were likely made locally.

⁴Cf. i. 10.45: interea pax arua colat.

⁵Vergil Eclogue iv. 6.

however, but gradually, in the same way as the boy whose advent is announced in this poem matures from infancy to manhood. It is only when the child has become a man that the trader will quit the sea and cease to exchange his wares:

cedet et ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus
mutabit merces: . . . ¹

Tibullus and Vergil each use the words pinus and merces; nor is nautica removed etymologically from nautica. Vergil predicts further that when the boy has reached manhood, the strong ploughman will remove his oxen from under the yoke:

robustus quoque iam tauris iuga solvet arator;²

Here the two poets share iugum and taurus. Tibullus in his lines

ipsae mella dabant quercus, ultraque ferebant
obuia securis ubera lactis oues, (i. 3. 45-46)

seems to have borrowed liberally from Vergil's description of the goats coming home for milking: "ipsae lacte domum referent distenta capellae/ubera";³ and recalls strongly Vergil's picture of honey distilled upon the oak: "et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella."⁴ With respect to the separating of plots by the setting of boundary stones, Vergil mentions in Georgics I, that in the Golden Age the practice was unlawful.⁵

In writing about peace in this passage, Tibullus recalls one of the

¹Ibid., 38-39.

²Ibid., 41.

³Ibid., 21-22.

⁴Ibid., 30.

⁵Vergil Georgics i. 126-127: "ne signare quidem aut partiri limite campum/fas erat: . . ."

attributes Hesiod gave to the Golden Age. The golden race, wrote Hesiod, dwelt in ease and peace upon their lands with many good things: ". . . οἱ δ' ἔθελημοὶ/ἥσυχοι ἔργ' ἐνέμοντο σὺν ἐσθλοῖσιν πολέεσσιν." ¹

Tibullus begins the tenth elegy of Book I by asking what man first invented the fearful sword: "Quis fuit, horrendos primus qui protulit enses?" ² The invention of the sword was one of the marks of man's fall from the position of peaceful happiness he enjoyed while living in the Golden Age. ³ The epithet ferreus in the second verse of this poem indicates both the disposition of this inventor and the chief characteristic of the age of violence. In the early days of primaeval simplicity when a visitor could see wine-cups made of beech upon a host's table, there were no wars, there was no need for fortifications. Then, a shepherd, free from care, could sleep among his flocks.

non arces, non vallus erat, somnumque petebat
securus uarias dux gregis inter oues. (i. 10. 9-10)

Had I lived then, wrote Tibullus, neither should I have known the dismal weapons of the mob nor heard the war-trumpet, my heart trembling. ⁴

The praiseworthy man was the one who pursued a settled, peaceful life, centered in his family.

¹Hesiod W. D. 118-119.

²i. 10. 1.

³See Smith, op. cit., p. 377: "For Tibullus and for the poets in general who believe . . . in a fall from grace the first sword and the first ship mark the beginning of our long downward path since the Golden Age."

⁴i. 10. 11-12: "tunc mihi uita foret uulgi nec tristia nossem/arma nec audissem corde micante tubam."

quin potius laudandus hic est quem prole parata
occupat in parua pigra senecta casa!
ipse suas sectatur oues, at filius agnos,
et calidam fesso comparat uxor aquam. (i. 10. 39-42)

Such a man, having produced sons, was able to live out his old age in a small cottage. He was free to attend to his sheep and to see his son care for the lambs. And at the end of a tiring day on the fields, his faithful wife had warm water ready for his bath.¹ Tibullus expresses the hope that his life might be like this when his hair begins to whiten and when he has reached the stage of recalling, as an old man, the deeds of bygone days:

sic ego sim, liceatque caput candescere canis
temporis et prisci facta referre senem. (i. 10. 43-44)

This was a life removed from Tibullus' present experience when he was drawn to war: nunc ad bella trahor.² It was the kind of life possible only in time of peace. At the end of I. 10 Tibullus invites to his land and to his generation, the Goddess Peace, whose praises he has sung a little earlier. Peace is bidden to come, holding ears of grain and offering an abundance of fruit:

at nobis, Pax alma, veni spicamque teneto,
profluat et pomis candidus ante sinus. (i. 10. 67-68)

¹Cf. E. W. Handley (ed.), *The Dyskolos of Menander* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1965), p. 86: "ἰκο.) θερμὸν <δ> ὕδωρ πρ[ο]σέταξέ μοι ποιεῖν ὁ πάππας ἐξ ἰών . " (verses 193-194 of the text). See also the note on p. 165. Knemon, the old δύσκολος who worked his own farm, had his teen-age daughter living with him to help him about the house and to work for him in the fields. Knemon's daughter prepares the water for her father's bath, as the wife of Tibullus' rustic does for her husband.

²i. 10. 13.

Radiant Peace, he said earlier, first led oxen under the curved yoke to plough; Peace nourished the vines and stored juices in the grapes so that a man might pour for his son wine from jugs that his father had used;¹ in time of peace the hoe and the ploughshare shine, whereas a soldier's grim weapons rust in some dark place:

interea pax arua colat. pax candida primum
duxit araturos sub iuga curua boues:
pax aluit uites et sucos condidit uuae,
funderet ut nato testa paterna merum:
pace bidens uomerque nitent, at tristia duri
militis in tenebris occupat arma situs. -- (1. 10. 45-50)

Peace is important to Tibullus, the husbandman. In time of war the fields are ravaged, the countryside becomes a battle ground. The men who would normally sow, and tend, and reap, and garner, are off to war. They use metal for deadly purposes, thinking only of how it may harm mankind. But in time of Peace--shining, white-clad Peace--the land is at rest. It receives the furrows made by the plough, it welcomes the seed into its soil, it responds to rain and sun so that what has been committed to it can grow and ripen and be gathered in. But this takes time. Nature works in seasons. And the countryside needs peace and quiet so that cereals and fruits can yield in their own time. Then the husbandman rejoices in the fruits of his labors; then he can carry on the tradition of his own fathers in his home, and when the harvest is in, he can clean and repair his tools so that they shine for the next year's tasks.

¹Tibullus is a traditionalist here, as he was in the matter of his religion. See supra, p. 34. See also i. 10. 15 and ii. 1. 2.

Tibullus here is a representative of the whole nation which Augustus took under his imperium, calling himself Princeps, a nation which Tacitus described in Annales I. 1 as "weary of civil discord":

at Pompei Crassique potentia cito in Caesarem,
Lepidi atque Antonii arma in Augustum cessere,
qui cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa nomine
principis sub imperium accepit.¹

Tibullus, together with the people of his time, looked for a new era--an era of peace--following the victory of Octavian at Actium.²

Tibullus' longest elegy, the fifth in Book II is a hymn to Apollo,³ the selected patron deity of Augustus.⁴ In this poem Tibullus entreats Apollo to be gentle and to bury in an unconquerable sea the monstrous signs⁵ attendant upon Julius Caesar's murder. He also prays for an omen which will signify a blessed and holy season, a season of respite from the strife the Roman people had experienced since 44 B. C.:

¹Tacitus Annales i. 1.

²See Smith, op. cit., p. 385, where the author points out that the theme of peace had a peculiar significance because the poet was addressing the generation to which Tacitus referred.

³Five times the poet addresses Apollo by the name Phoebus, once by the name Apollo. Tibullus uses in some form the pronoun tu and its adjective tuus to refer to Apollo fifteen times. He invokes the god ten times, using various verbs in the singular imperative form.

⁴See Bailey, op. cit., p. 175.

⁵These prodigies have been listed by Tibullus in verses 71-78. Cf. Vergil Georgics i. 461-488 where the poet mentions a number of signs similar to these. Both poets mention an eclipse of the sun, the clash of arms in the sky, voices in the groves, beasts talking as men.

. . . sed tu iam mitis, Apollo,
prodigia indomitis merge sub aequoribus,
et succensa sacris crepitet bene laurea flammis,
omine quo felix et sacer annus erit. (ii. 5. 79-82)

This season, when it comes, will be one which will give farmers cause to rejoice:

distendet spicis horrea plena Ceres,
oblitus et musto feriet pede rusticus uuas,
dolia dum magni deficientque lacus:
ac madidus baccho sua festa Palilia pastor
concinet: a stabulis tunc procul este lupi.
ille leuis stipulae sollemnis potus acervos
accendet, flammis transilietque sacras.
et fetus matrona dabit, natusque parenti
oscula comprehensis auribus eripiet,
nec taedebit auum paruo aduigilare nepoti
balbaque cum puero dicere uerba senem.
tunc operata deo pubes discumbet in herba,
arboris antiquae qua leuis umbra cadit,
aut e ueste sua tendent umbracula sertis
uincta, coronatus stabit et ipse calix.
at sibi quisque dapes et festas extruet alte
caespitibus mensas caespitibusque torum. (ii. 5. 84-100)

Ceres will swell the barns with corn; the dolia (large wine-jars) and vats will not be great enough to contain the crushed grapes; the shepherd will have time to celebrate his festival of Pales; families will increase; fathers and grandfathers will have time to spend with their children and grandchildren; and young men keeping rustic festival, will recline upon the shady grass, their wine cups crowned beside them. Surely this is life in peacetime, life in a Golden Age.

In Georgics II, Vergil gives us a lovely picture of the life of a happy husbandman:

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,
agricolas! quibus ipsa, procul discordibus armis,
fundit humo facilem victum iustissima tellus.

...

agricola incurvo terram dimovit aratro:
hinc anni labor, hinc patriam parvosque nepotes
sustinet, hinc armenta boum meritosque iuvenços.
nec requies, quin aut pomis exuberet annus
aut fetu pecorum aut Cerealis mergite culmi,
proventuque oneret sulcos atque horrea vincat.

...
interea dulces pendent circum oscula nati,

...
ipse dies agitat festos fususque per herbam,
ignis ubi in medio et socii cratera coronant,
te libans, Lenae . . .¹

Here is a husbandman far removed from the discord of war, a husbandman engaged in work which though at certain seasons allows no rest, nevertheless offers bounty both to provide for his family and to swell his storage barns. His dear children await his kisses. And he keeps festival with his friends, offering libation and calling upon Bacchus. Such was the life which prevailed in the Golden Age when Saturn ruled, when men heard no battle-signals nor the ring of swords being struck upon the anvil:

aureus hanc vitam in terris Saturnus agebat;
necdum etiam audierant inflari classica, necdum
impositos duris crepitare incudibus ensis.²

Tibullus, in his prayer to Apollo for a season of peace and prosperity, hoped for the return of a Golden Age characterized by bountiful harvests, wine-filled vats, happy family life, the opportunity for rustic worship and the celebration of country festivals--some of the very conditions Vergil described as having existed in the age of Saturn's reign.

¹Vergil Georgics ii. 458-460; 513-518; 523; 527-529.

²Ibid., 538-540.

We have seen that Tibullus, like other poets before him, looked upon a Golden Age as an age which offered men, particularly husbandmen, a good and a desirable life. Often his longing for such a life was heightened by the difficult circumstances in which he found himself. Like Hesiod, Tibullus sometimes looked back to the Golden Age, regretting that the times in which he lived were not so good as the days of that better age. With Vergil, Tibullus both looked back reflectively upon Saturn's reign as a good one, and looked forward with hope for the coming of another Golden Age.

CHAPTER V

SOME WORDS IN TIBULLUS' TWO THEMES

horrida uerba doma. . . . (i. 5. 6)

Dicamus bona uerba:. . . (ii. 2. 1)

We have seen in this study that Tibullus' poetry consisted of two themes: that of love, and that of praise for the country and the life lived in it. Special consideration has been given to the second of these themes to the almost total exclusion of the first. The reason for this is that since the theme of love is one of conflict and of frustration, a poet of gentle disposition like Tibullus had to have another theme in which to express his genius. He had to write about those things with which he had grown up, and was therefore familiar, the things which gave him absolute contentment and pleasure. A consideration of some of the words found in Tibullus' two themes proves profitable. We find that the poet's vocabulary reflects that he is a husbandman-herdsman even when he writes of love, that he uses some of the words which we find also in the bucolic poetry of Vergil, and that others of his words reveal him to be familiar with and happy in the rural scene. In his amatory verse Tibullus uses words often associated with warfare, and the ideas conveyed by this vocabulary often reveal him to be an unhappy lover.

When we find words of rustic connotation in passages of Tibullus' amatory verse, we realize that Tibullus was ever a husbandman and a herdsman at heart, even when he was writing of love. Such words appear

in his poetry also when he was imagining a scene in another world. In I. 2, for example, Tibullus reminded Venus, his instructress in the ways of love, that he was part of her harvest:

at mihi parce, Venus: semper tibi dedita seruit
mens mea: quid messes uris acerba tuas? (i. 2. 97-98)

In another instance, when he warned Pholoe not to torture Marathus, but to spare the tender youth, he looked upon the boy as a slip of a man.¹ One cannot but think that he had in mind the young vines which he often planted.

neu Marathum torque: puero quae gloria victo est?
in ueteres esto dura, puella, senes.
parce precor tenero: . . . (i. 8. 49-51)

ipse seram teneras maturo tempore uites (i. 1. 7)

In yet another elegy, Priapus, the amoris magister, advises Tibullus that there is need for patience in the business of love. A young lover will submit only gradually to the affections of another: "paulatim sub iuga colla dabit."² In I. 10 the poet uses the same phrase with reference to the submission of oxen to the plough:

. . . pax candida primum
duxit araturos sub iuga curua boues: (i. 10. 45-46)

Nor does the adjective describing the end result vary, whether Tibullus qualifies hair, well groomed by a lover: culta coma,³ or a vine cared for by a cultivator: uinea culta,⁴ or a plot of soil tilled by a husbandman:

¹Cf. J. P. Postgate, in Catullus, Tibullus, and Pervigilium Veneris (Loeb Classical Library, London: W. Heinemann Ltd., 1931), who translates parce precor tenero: "spare the tender shoot, I pray."

²i. 4. 16.

³Ibid., 4.

⁴Ibid., 10. 35.

cultum solum.¹ Tibullus showed a husbandman's eye for description when he pictured Tityos in Tartarus, stretched over nine measures of land: "porrectusque nouem Tityos per iugera terrae."² And he used the shepherd's expression, pascere, when he described the giant's supplying the vultures with food: "adsiduas atro uiscere pascit aues."³

There is a small group of words which Tibullus used in only one place, that is in his pastoral account of Rome's beginnings.⁴ These are the words Pan, ilex, fistula, and calamus.

lacte madens illic suberat Pan ilicis umbrae
et facta agresti lignea falce Pales,
pendebatque uagi pastoris in arbore uotum,
garrula siluestri fistula sacra deo,
fistula cui semper decrescit harundinis ordo:
nam calamus cera iungitur usque minor. (ii. 5. 27-32)

These words, appearing also in the Eclogues, formed part of Vergil's bucolic vocabulary. Vergil tells us that Pan, who cared for sheep and their shepherds, was first to join reeds together to make a pipe, and first to make these pipes to sing.

Pan primum calamos cera coniungere pluris
instituit, Pan curat ovis oviumque magistros.⁵

Panaque, qui primus calamos non passus inertis.⁶

¹Ibid., 1. 2.

²Ibid., 3. 75.

³Ibid., 76.

⁴See supra, pp. 22 ff.

⁵Vergil Eclogue ii. 32-33.

⁶Ibid., viii. 24.

In Eclogue VII we find Daphnis, the ideal shepherd, sitting beneath the shade of an ilex: "Forte sub arguta consederat ilice Daphnis." ¹ In Eclogue II the shepherd Corydon describes a pipe, fistula, which Damoetas has given him as a gift:

est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis
fistula, . . . ²

And in Eclogue VII Corydon sings: "hic arguta sacra pendeat fistula pinu." ³ Tibullus and Vergil share not only the names of the pipes, but also the description of the pattern on which they were fashioned. And each poet shows a fistula hanging upon a tree. Tibullus mentions another pipe, the oaten pipe, or auena. It is really the same thing as the fistula. ⁴ The plural, iunctae avenae or structae avenae, means the Pan-pipes. Upon this pipe, Tibullus tells us, the farmer first played a song which he was later to sing on some festive occasion before the gods:

et satur arenti primum est modulatus auena
carmen, ut ornatos diceret ante deos. (ii. l. 53-54)

In Eclogue I Tityrus is lying beneath the shade of a beech tree, playing upon a similar pipe.

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi
silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena. ⁵

The fact that Tibullus uses fistula and avena is important because in doing

¹ Ibid., vii. l.

² Ibid., ii. 37-38.

³ Ibid., vii. 24.

⁴ See Smith, op. cit., p. 403.

⁵ Vergil Eclogue i. 1-2.

so, he is introducing pastoral into elegy.

Tibullus' use of the words urbs and rus is significant. What did Tibullus say about the city? In I. 2 he wrote of it as a place in which he wandered, a troubled lover.¹ In I. 3 he mentioned it as a place in which he bade Delia "farewell," and from which he departed for war.² In II. 3 the city was a place from which Nemesis had been taken³ and was therefore a place in which he could not bear to abide.⁴ When he wrote in the same poem, "urbisque tumultu/portatur ualidis mille columna iugis,"⁵ he showed the city to be a place of confusion where some men strive to impress others with externals. In each instance urbs was a location which had unhappy or distasteful associations for Tibullus. In addition, we find that in Tibullus' poetry the city is a place without personality, because nowhere does he describe it. Tibullus seems to have given little thought to the city as a busy hub of interesting human activity. Horace, on the other hand, caught the pulse-beat of city life, and put it into his poems. In Satire I. 9, for example, he writes about his walking down the Via Sacra, tells how he met a garrulous nuisance and was forced to carry on a conversation with him. He describes the location, across the Tiber and near Caesar's park, of the home of an acquaintance, mentions

¹i. 2. 25.

²Ibid., 3. 9.

³ii. 3. 61.

⁴Ibid., 2.

⁵Ibid., 43-44.

the temple of Vesta, discusses Maecenas and how to gain entrance to his house and circle of friends, and finally he describes briefly a scene at the law court. Here the reader is made aware of the city as a living thing, and as a centre of life. Not so in the poems of Tibullus. Tibullus belonged to the country. It is the action, the merriment and the excitement of a country festival which Tibullus describes and which he allows his reader to share with him. Tibullus' song was of the country: "rura cano."¹

Tibullus used the word rus eleven times. He employed the word twice in Book I, each time referring to his farm. In I. 1 he offered Ceres a crown of corn spikes from the produce of his farm.² In I. 5 he returned in reverie to his farm³ to escape the bitterness of a disappointment. In Book II Tibullus used the word rus to represent the countryside in general. It occurs six times in II. 1, Tibullus' graphic description of the great country festival, the Ambarvalia.⁴ Here the countryside is the source of grain crops, the scene of the honey industry, the setting for slave-boys' rustic worship and women's homely tasks. In II. 3 the countryside is the particular area to which Nemesis has been taken by a diues amator and therefore the place to which Tibullus will go and in

¹ii. 1. 37.

²i. 1. 15-16: flaua Ceres, tibi sit nostro de rure corona/spicea.

. . . .

³Ibid., 5.21: rura colam, . . .

⁴See supra, pp. 34 ff.

which he will do a ploughman's work: "ducite: ad imperium dominae sulcabimus agros."¹ In II. 5 rus is that place of bounty which supplied a young maid--by the generosity of her shepherd-lover--with gifts of cheese and a lamb. In Tibullus' poetry, farm and countryside are places well described, places with personality. For the reader of Tibullus the countryside becomes alive and is the centre of human activity. Each time he used the word rus, Tibullus referred to a place which had pleasant associations for him, or in the case of the situation in II. 3, to a place to which he did not hesitate to go, ready to do a countryman's work.

It is worthy of note that after his love affair with Delia was ended, Tibullus used the word rus far more often than he had done previously. We find two instances of its use in Book I, nine instances in Book II. It is possible that after this, perhaps the tenderest of his love affairs,² his thoughts turned more to the country, that part of the world which he loved, and in which he felt secure. Three things which Tibullus tells us made him feel securus, were to fall asleep to the pleasant sound of falling rain: "quam iuvat . . . /// securum somnos imbre iuuante sequi,"³ to know that the wealth he had gathered together, by inheritance and by his working his farm, was neither too much nor too little for his needs: "ego composito

¹ ii. 3. 79. q. Ibid., 1: "Rura mean, Cornute, tenent . . . puel-
lam:"

² Although Tibullus owned absolute servitude to Nemesis (ii. 3. 79-80) and although he expressed his willingness to die if she but look upon him kindly (ii. 4. 55-60), there is no passage in his poetry concerning Nemesis to equal the tenderness with which he writes of Delia in i. 1. 57-68.

³ i. 1. 45-48.

securus aceruo,"¹ and to sleep among his flocks: "somnumque petebat/
securus uarias dux gregis inter oues."² All of these experiences were
associated with life as he knew it in the country. In the country Tibullus
was at home.

In his amatory verse Tibullus uses some words and presents some
ideas which he employs also in connection with warfare. Such words and
ideas very often reveal him as an unhappy lover. Tibullus called himself
a leader and a good soldier in the army of love.³ Sometimes he found
that his warfare in this field was in vain.⁴ He did not like being a soldier
on the battlefield of war. In I. 10 he wrote, "alius sit fortis in armis,/
sternat et aduersos Marte fauente duces."⁵ In I. 2, Tibullus mentions the
discomforts of cold and of rain to which the exclusus amator is exposed:

non mihi pigra nocent hibernae frigora noctis,
non mihi cum multa decidit imber aqua.
non labor hic laedit, . . . (i. 2. 29-31)

Although he admits here that these hardships will be nothing to him if
Delia opens the door, still he acknowledges their existence as a threat to
a lover, and calls them labor. In I. 1 Tibullus used the word labor to

¹Ibid., 77.

²Ibid., 10. 9-10.

³i. 1. 75: hic ego dux milesque bonus:

⁴Ibid., 5. 67-68: "heu canimus frustra nec uerbis uicta patescit/
ianua sed plena est percutienda manu."

⁵Ibid., 10. 29-30. See also supra, p. 7.

represent the hardships of military campaigning.¹

Diuitias alius fuluo sibi congerat auro
et teneat culti iugera multa soli,
quem labor adsiduus uicino terreat hoste,
Martia cui somnos classica pulsa fugent: (i. 1. 1-4)

To Tibullus these hardships were never-ending (adsiduus), terrifying (terreat), and the signals for battle which followed hard upon them, disturbing (somnos fugent). In the paraclausithyron motive, the door itself was something to be conquered by the lover, and the guard a force to be overcome, just as for the professional soldier there were bands of Cilicians to be defeated,² and towns to be conquered.³

ianua, iam pateas uni mihi uicta querellis, (i. 2. 9)

sed pretium si grande feras, custodia uicta est (ii. 4. 33)

Sometimes a lover found himself separated from his loved one. In I. 5 Tibullus wrote, "Asper eram et bene discidium me ferre loquebar."⁴ This separation from Delia left the poet as unhappy as that which he experienced when, having set out for the Aegaeon with Messalla, he was parted from his family.⁵ There was disturbed sleep for the lover as for the soldier on the battlefield.⁶ The betrayed lover spent wakeful nights, accompanied only by his many griefs.

¹ See Smith, op. cit., p. 185. The hardships involved were foraging, digging of trenches, fortifying of camps, etc.

² i. 2. 67: "ille licet Cilicum uictas agat ante cateruas."

³ ii. 5. 116: ante suos currus oppida uicta feret,

⁴ i. 5, 1.

⁵ Ibid., 3. 5-8.

⁶ Ibid., 1. 4.

uel cum promittit, subito sed perfida fallit,
est mihi nox multis euigilanda malis. (i. 8. 63-64)

Riches were a corrupting influence in a lover's life. And they were both the motive and the reward for a man's going to war:

admonui quotiens 'auro ne pollue formam:
saepe solent auro multa subesse mala.
diuitiis captus si quis uiolauit amorem,
asperaque est illi difficilisque Venus . . . ' (i. 9. 17-20)

Diuitias alius fuluo sibi congerat auro
et teneat culti iugera multa soli,
quem labor adsiduus uicino terreat hoste, (i. 1. 1-3)

The riches to be gained in war were a second thing Tibullus wished for any man other than himself.

In his association with Amor, Tibullus was dealing with an armed god. The lover's deity set traps for men: "an gloria magna est/insidias homini composuisse deum?"¹ He caused great distress to his victims, and to Tibullus in particular:

. . . sed postquam sumpsit sibi tela Cupido,
heu heu quam multis ars dedit ista malum!
et mihi praecipue, . . . (ii. 5. 107-109)

As a soldier on the battlefield, Tibullus dreaded such weapons, lest they inflict upon him a mortal wound:² "et iam quis forsitan hostis/haesura in nostro tela gerit latere." ³ As an afflicted lover, Tibullus cried that he might see the weapons of Amor destroyed:

acer Amor, fractas utinam tua tela sagittas,
si licet, extinctas aspiciamque faces! (ii. 6. 15-16)

¹Ibid., 6. 3-4.

²See Smith, op. cit., p. 379, where the author points out the application of the noun latus to mean a vital part of the body.

³i. 10. 13-14.

Indeed he would have put an end to his miseries by death: "iam mala finissem leto."¹ This word for death, letum, is a strong word, linked etymologically with lēre, to blot out, and with delēre, to annihilate. Tibullus used it in one other context, in I. 3, when he described life under Jupiter's iron rule, after the peace of Saturn's reign was ended, when man was subject to wounds and slaughter and sudden death.

nunc Ioue sub domino caedes et uulnera semper,
nunc mare, nunc leti mille repente uiae. (i. 3. 49-50)

When Tibullus wrote, in another poem,

an nihil ille miser meruit, nos ad mala nostra
uertimus, in saeuas quod dedit ille feras? (i. 10. 5-6)

he was saying that the evils which man created for himself by misusing what had been made for his self-defense, were the evils accompanying war. Mala represented for him the frustrations and griefs of a lover, as well as all the evils which attended war. Similarly, letum meant death for lover and warrior alike. Tibullus would have ended his griefs by ending his life, but for the attribute of hope.

iam mala finissem leto, sed credula uitam
spes fouet et fore crās semper ait melius.
spes alit agricolas, spes sulcis credit aratis
semina quae magno faenore reddat ager. (ii. 6. 19-22)

Nor was that which saved the distracted lover the often frustrated hope of a lover. It was rather the husbandman's hope--that hope renewed each year when the first shoots from a planted seed break through the earth, that hope renewed each year at harvest-time.²

¹ii. 6. 19.

²Ibid., 1. 47-48.

Hardships such as are endured in campaigning, doors to be conquered, guards to be overcome, wakeful nights, separation of lovers, enemies close at hand, a deity strongly armed, wounds and frustrations which drive a lover almost to the point of death are the experiences Tibullus encountered as a lover. These experiences comprised a life which the poet summed up as a state of servitude, a servitude which he called seruitium triste:

Hic mihi seruitium uideo dominamque paratam:
iam mihi, libertas illa paterna, uale.
seruitium sed triste datur, teneorque catenis,
et numquam misero uincla remittit Amor,
et seu quid merui seu nil peccauimus, urit. (ii. 4. 1-5)

For Tibullus, whose numerous friends included Messalla, a loving mother, an affectionate sister, a shepherd on his farm, and the rustics in his neighborhood, it was a hard servitude to be bound by an inexorable god to Nemesis alone. To be bound by chains was a difficult state for one who had known freedom to work as a husbandman upon his farm or to roam the fields of Latium as a shepherd, and for one whose only chains were the restrictions of the season: a right time to plant, and a time when the harvest had to be taken in. To be in bondage to Amor was a sad life for one whom Pales, goddess of shepherds would release from his heaviest responsibilities whenever the lambing season was over and the new flock was on its way to maturity. It was a strict servitude for one who through the years had put his confidence in the Lares patrii as custodes of his property¹ and servatores² of his person

¹i. 1. 20.

²Ibid., 10. 15.

in time of war. This servitude meant his saying farewell to all these things to which he had grown accustomed, to the liberty which he had inherited from his forefathers: "iam mihi, libertas illa paterna, uale."¹ As a lover, he was bidding this liberty farewell.

The life of a lover was like the life of a warrior. The emotional conflicts of the lover were like those of the man alone on the battlefield, faced with death. The lover accepted was the lover about to begin a new life; the lover rejected was a man who has no desire to live. The words of the poetry of love were for Tibullus the words of the poetry of war. This theme he did not want to sing: "Musae, . . . /non ego uos, ut sint bella canenda, colo."² Tibullus was a husbandman and a herdsman. He loved to plant a seed, to watch it grow, and to reap its fruits. He loved to care for the ewe, to see the flock increase, and to tend new lambs until they grew to maturity. He loved life. Tibullus loved the country and sang of it with words that brought to life the country scene, and in words that showed his place was there. Tibullus was a Roman and a rustic.

¹ii. 4. 2.

²Ibid., 15-16.

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